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will be found a remarkably even balance of characters derived from each; this is especially true of the coloration. In size it more nearly approaches the larger species, but the tarsus is the same length as that of *L. c. californicus*. Interesting results might be obtained from a study of series of specimens from the same locality. \*

## SOME BIRDS OF THE SAN QUENTIN BAY REGION, BAJA, CALIFORNIA

By ALFRED B. HOWELL

SAN QUENTIN BAY is a body of water some five miles wide at its greatest width, and seven miles long, situated midway between Lat. 30° and 31° N.

With the exception of a very narrow and tortuous channel the water is but a few feet deep, and at low tide the extensive mud and sand flats which are exposed make ideal feeding grounds for vast flocks of waders. It is the winter home also of hordes of ducks. To the eastward lies a plain thirty miles long, which gently slopes upward until ten miles away it is gradually lost in the foothills of the San Pedro Martir Mountains. This plain being rather barren and dry has few forms of bird life except at its lowest portion where there is a series of fresh water lagoons. Between the bay and the sea lies a strip of wind-blown sand.

From April 26 until May 3, 1910, I was at the village of San Quentin; and from July 19 until the 23d we were anchored in the bay. The following statements hold good for both visits unless otherwise stated.

I passed San Martin Island (opposite the bay) at 4:30 a. m. on April 26. Black-vented Shearwaters (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) were swarming around the boat, circling in their characteristic way, while a great many could be seen leaving or returning to the hillside where a large colony was evidently nesting. Cassin Auklets (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) and Xantus Murrelets (*Brachyramphus hypoleucus*) were also present in some numbers, while White-winged Scoters (*Oidemia deglandi*) were numerous both outside and inside of the bay. Pelicans (*Pelecanus californicus*) and both of the Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax a. albociliatus* and *P. penicillatus*) sailed past us, but not until we were well inside the bay did I see something which I have always longed to observe. A sandy tide island was black with cormorants, but it was too far away to determine the species. There were acres of them, scores of thousands, and after we had passed they began to leave in a long black ribbon, never varying in thickness or width, and continuing for more than an hour, by which time we had passed out of sight.

Twenty miles from land, on July 24, four Black-footed Albatrosses (*Diomedea nigripes*) put in an appearance as we were becalmed, and remained with us throughout the day, paddling about the boat, and investigating in the most friendly way imaginable. I threw bits of bread to them when they were within ten feet of me, but except for carefully examining it, they would have nothing to do with it. One of them continually craned his neck straight up as far as it would go, while swimming in circles around another. All four left for the open sea late in the afternoon, in the wake of two large whales.

At this time *Puffinus opisthomelas* seemed to be absent, but on the 19th I wit-

\* Mr. Geo. D. Peck has generously donated this specimen to the University of California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, in which it is no. 19113 of the ornithological collection.—H. S. S.

nessed a flight of what were presumably Sooty Shearwaters (*P. griseus*) which took about five hours in passing.

In April, at the lagoons to which I referred above, there were numerous Pied-billed Grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*), Green-winged Teal (*Nettion carolinense*), Shovellers (*Spatula clypeata*), Pintails (*Dafila acuta*), Lesser Scaups (*Marila affinis*), and Ruddies (*Erismatura jamaicensis*); also the ever-present Coot (*Fulica americana*), while a few Brant (*Branta nigricans*) lingered in the bay. I have it on the best of authority that the latter are present in incredible numbers during the winter months.

The Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*) is common here, but at my later visit *Larus heermanni* was just as numerous, mainly in immature plumage but many adults also. Royal Terns (*Sterna maxima*) were everywhere and the natives told me that they breed in the locality. Several Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) were seen, and at least two Snowy Egrets (*Egretta candidissima*). One of these exhibited considerable curiosity at our whale-boat as we were sailing down the bay, and circled about it five times at no greater distance than forty feet before it was satisfied. This individual was in beautiful breeding plumage, with very long "aigrettes".

Light-footed Rails (*Rallus levipes*) were common in the marshes, as I could tell from their tracks, and on April 27 I found a set of seven fresh eggs. Some smaller form of rail was also present but I was unable to tell to what species it belonged. Foot-prints only were seen. Four Black-necked Stilts (*Himantopus mexicanus*) were busy in the shallow waters of the lagoons at the last-mentioned date, Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) were breeding, and in July a number of Western Willet (*Catoptrophorus s. inornatus*) were investigating the sandy beaches. In both the months that I was present there was a large flock of Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*) numbering some two hundred birds I should say, and the residents informed me that they had remained throughout the spring. Snowy Plovers (*Aegialitis nivosa*) were fairly swarming, and a few of both the Black and Frazar Oystercatchers (*Haematopus bachmani* and *H. frazari*) were to be found on the rocks at the mouth of the bay.

Several Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura m. carolinensis*), Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes a. septentrionalis*), Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto c. hypogaea*), Roadrunners (*Geococcyx californianus*), Rufous Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufus*), Ravens (*Corvus c. sinuatus*), Western Meadowlarks (*Sturnella neglecta*) and one Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) were seen, and Tricolored Blackbirds (*Agelaius tricolor*) haunted the tules.

Two pairs of Arkansas Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*) were nesting in the trees of the village and kept up a continual clatter. From what I heard, Dwarf Cowbirds (*Molothrus a. obscurus*) had evidently been common during the winter, but I saw only two of them, and glimpses were had of a few Scott Orioles (*Icterus parisorum*) in some scraggy trees on the plain.

A fact which impressed me as being strange was the total absence of House Finches, nor did I meet them in the mountains and foothills east of San Quentin in the winter of 1908. This is not the limit of their range, however, as true *Carpodacus m. frontalis* has frequently been taken between the country south of here and Lat. 28° N.

Belding Sparrows (*Passerculus beldingi*) were abundant in the marshes, frequenting especially the neighborhood of the pier. Gambel Sparrows (*Zonotrichia l. gambeli*) were still present at my first visit, and I was surprised to find a single male Black-chinned Sparrow (*Spizella atrogularis*) so close to the coast. In April,

Bell Sparrows (*Amphispiza belli*) were sparingly scattered in pairs over the plain, and in July they were in family parties and easily the commonest bird.

In the former month Western Martins (*Progne s. hesperia*) were around the water-holes, as were several Tree Swallows (*Iridoprocne bicolor*), while Barn (*Hirundo erythrogastra*) and Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) were setting up house-keeping in the village. Two pairs of Rough-winged Swallows (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) were found breeding in the bank along the bay, and as far as I can ascertain, this is the first time that the latter species has actually been found breeding on the peninsula, although it apparently does so clear to Cape San Lucas.

California Shrikes (*Lanius l. gambeli*) are common residents here, and far up into the mountains. The warblers were represented by one each of the Yellow (probably *Dendroica a. brewsteri*, although I am not sure), and the Black-throated Gray (*D. nigrescens*), both of which were seen in the pepper trees not a hundred yards from the shore.

Mearns Thrasher (*Toxostoma c. mearnsi*) is the resident subspecies beyond a doubt, but the three individuals which I saw in the heavier brush were so wary that I was unable to get a shot at them. The 1910 A. O. U. Check-list gives the range of this form as "Lower Sonoran Zone", but in the San Pedros, February 1908 I found them to be tolerably common nearly to the higher limit of the Upper Sonoran Zone where I discovered an incomplete set of two eggs and an unfinished nest. These were among straggling pines on the bench-land at over three thousand feet.

Pallid Wren-tits (*Chamaea f. henshawii*) were occasionally seen, and Western Gnatcatchers (*Poliophtila c. obscura*) were common.

## SOME COLORADO HORNED OWL NOTES

By EDWARD R. WARREN

WITH ONE PHOTO

M R. KEYES'S paper in the January CONDOR, "A History of Certain Great Horned Owls", brought to my mind my own experience with a family of the Western Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus pallescens*) near Paonia, Delta County, Colorado. While some account of these was published in the *Wilson Bulletin* for September 1903, (A Nest of the Western Horned Owl), I have ventured to rewrite my recollections, and add a few other notes thinking they may prove interesting.

Paonia is situated in the valley of the North Fork of the Gunnison River, at an altitude of about 5,700 feet. The valley itself is quite wide, with mesas on either side, and then low hills gradually increasing in altitude. In the valley, where not cultivated, are sagebrush and greasewood, with cottonwoods along the river; on the hills are cedars and pinyons. The soil is largely an adobe, which when eroded forms more or less substantial cliffs or bluffs.

The nest was in a niche in the face of an adobe bluff a couple of miles up the North Fork Valley from the town. This bluff was somewhere about forty feet high, and the nest-site a little more than half way below the top. I was told that the birds had nested there for several years. It was on the eighth of May, 1901, that I made my first visit. As my friend and I approached the bluff we saw one of the parent birds sitting at the mouth of the hole, but it flew away before I had a chance